



TANJONG KATONG SECONDARY SCHOOL
Preliminary Examination 2023
Secondary 4

CANDIDATE
NAME

CLASS

INDEX NUMBER

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1184/02

Paper 2 Comprehension

11 August 2023

Candidates answer on the Question Paper Booklet.

1 hour 50 minutes

Additional Materials: Insert

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your Centre number, index number and name in the spaces at the top of this page.
Write in dark blue or black ballpoint pen.
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue, correction fluid/tape or highlighters.

Answer all questions.

Write your answers in the spaces provided on the Question Paper.
The Insert contains the texts for all the sections.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

Sections A & B

Mark Scheme

Prepared by Chng Woei Ling

Section A [5 marks]

Refer the online advertisement (**Text 1**) and the social media post (**Text 2**) on page 2 of the Insert for Questions 1 – 4.

1 Look at Text 1. Tick (✓) the most effective title for the image in this advertisement.

- ☒ No place for ageism at work
- ☐ An inclusive society, Our priority
- ☐ Equal worth, Equal respect

[1]

Two-thirds of the candidates chose the correct option. It is worrying that almost a third of the candidates chose the two other wrong options. Candidates need to unpack the image carefully. The image shows two old people holding cards with words showing discrimination at the workplace. It is clear that they are discriminated for being old. The image is further explained by the second paragraph of Text 1. In the third paragraph, there is a call for action to end workplace discrimination. Options 'An inclusive society, Our priority' and 'Equal worth, Equal respect' are overarching and generic aims of the TAFEP.

2 The advertisement states that 'it could happen to your parents or grandparents too'.

What effect is this intended to have on the reader?

It is to create empathy/concern or personal relevance for the reader so that he or she will support the fight against ageism at the workplace too.

[1]

Only the stronger candidates were able to gain the mark for this question. This is a more challenging question as the candidates must **identify the emotion evoked or impact on the reader** before **linking it to the action the writer wants the reader to take**. Majority of the candidates simply skipped to the action required of the reader without explaining the effect of the sentence. Others were inaccurate in identifying the impact of the sentence.

Accepted alternatives for creating empathy or personal relevance: makes reader feel personally involved, emotionally invested, relate to the problem

Inaccurate explanations which are not accepted include: make reader feel emotional, warn/alert/shock/anger the reader, make the reader feel compelled/obliged to take action, make reader realise the severity of the situation, show how serious the issue is, make reader feel a sense of urgency, make reader feel a part of the discrimination, create relations with the reader, sentence is intended to relate to the reader, get reader to understand the relevance of the issue

Generic explanations which are not accepted: get reader's attention, get reader to take action

3 Identify a word in Text 2 which reflects the experience in Text 1 of facing 'discrimination'.

The word is 'prejudice'.

[1]

Sadly, a significant number of candidates lost the mark for this straightforward question. They fell for the distractors 'injustice' and 'indignities' which are less specific terms which may not include the idea of treating different categories of people, especially based on preconceived notions due to their ethnicity, age, sex, or disability etc.

'Injustice' means a situation in which there is no fairness

'Indignities' means something that causes a loss of respect for someone or for yourself

A small handful of candidates did not read the question carefully and chose the word 'bias' which is found in Text 1 instead of Text 2.

- 4 Look at both Texts 1 and 2 and statements (a) and (b) below.

Decide whether the following statements refer to Text 1, Text 2, both texts, or neither text.

Circle the answer you have chosen for each statement.

- a) Readers are asked to join the writer in taking action.

Text 1 / Text 2 / **Both** / Neither

- b) The tone suggests the writer and reader are of the same status.

Text 1 / **Text 2** / Both / Neither

[2]

It is disappointing to note that despite having done practices for this question type, many candidates were not able to score two marks.

For part (a), the clues pointing to both texts asking the readers to take actions are: '**Together, let's do our part** to create a fair and inclusive workplace for all.' (Text 1) and 'Such injustice could happen to anyone. **Let's not back down** until change happens.' (Text 2)

For part (b), while both texts call for the same action, Text 1 is from an official organisation TAFEP while Text 2 is from a layman. Hence, the reader is of the same status as the writer of the social media post and not the advertisement from an organisation which is the authority on workplace fairness.

Section B [20 marks]

Refer to **Text 3** on pages 3 and 4 of the Insert for Questions 5 – 13.

- 5 In Paragraph 1, the writer describes the traffic on the roads. Explain how the language used in this paragraph makes the traffic seem intimidating. Support your ideas with **two** details from Paragraph 1.

'its traffic rushed with ferocity' (metaphor) suggests the cars were moving

at a high speed with great power, threatening the safety of pedestrians.

'(cars which) snarled and roared forward' (personification/ onomatopoeia)

suggests the loud and hostile/frightening noises the cars were making

Possible expansion: 'as though into a storm' (simile) suggests being exposed

to the danger of chaotic traffic. (idea of exposure to the elements) [2]

(Accept any two answers. Students are not required to name the literary devices. However, they are required to identify the quotations and explain them clearly. Each explanation must be distinct – one focusing on great speed and power while the other focusing on loud sounds.)

Majority of the candidates were able to identify the correct quotations. However, they were not able to explain them succinctly and precisely. Most explanations were generic and repeated either the word 'intimidating' or key words in the quotations.

For 'its traffic rushed with ferocity', candidates must unpack 'rushed' and 'ferocity' which indicated both speed and power/intensity respectively. Unfortunately, majority of the candidates only managed to identify the speed and did not explain the metaphoric use of 'ferocity'. Some who tried to explain 'ferocity' used another metaphor to do so which did not help them obtain the mark.

Answers that are not accepted include:

- cars were moving fiercely, aggressively, violently, recklessly
- there was heavy traffic
- traffic was charging like an animal

For '(cars which) snarled and roared forward', candidates need to realise that the cars in this scenario were stationary and waiting at the zebra crossing. Hence, any explanations indicating that the cars were moving very quickly or speeding are incorrect. Exceptions were made when candidates suggested cars were accelerating, showing that they understood the cars were not moving in the first place. The candidates need to unpack the personification/onomatopoeia 'snarled' and 'roared'. 'Snarled' suggests a growling, often aggressive sound while 'roared' indicates a very loud sound.

Answers that were not accepted include:

- Cars were honking angrily/threateningly/loudly (as the cars were not honking at all)
- Cars were noisy. (too generic, lacking intensity)
- Cars were making animal sounds.
- Cars were like a pack of wolves, teeth bared, ready to charge/attack (no mention of sound)

- 6 (a) In Paragraph 2, we are told 'Fathers like Stephen, child in tow, were an anomaly' (lines 12-13). What does the writer mean by this expression?

The writer means it is uncommon/rare/unusual for men to be shopping in a supermarket with their children. [1]

For this question, candidates need to explain the term anomaly. Most made a reasonable attempt at explaining the situation with reference to the context. Candidates who lost the mark often gave inaccurate explanations.

Answers not accepted include:

- It was uncommon/rare to see men taking care of/going out with their children/ not many fathers go out with their children (context missing)
- Fathers and children do not frequent the supermarket.
- There were no other fathers in the supermarket with their children.
- There were few fathers shopping with their children in the supermarket.
- Single fathers shopping with their children in supermarkets are an uncommon sight. (assumption made about single fathers)
- Fathers shopping with children are odd ones out.
- Kate and father stood out from the rest of the shoppers.
- It is not normal/abnormal/strange for fathers to bring children shopping.

- (b) What impression do you get of Stephen from Paragraph 2?

Stephen was a doting or involved father.

Other possible answers: family man/ hands-on father [1]

This question was modelled after 2021 O Level Q12(c). The markers' report which states: 'Question 12(c) asked what impression of Alma was given in the paragraph. Here, candidates were generally more successful, and a significant number suggested a plausible impression.' This suggests that markers likely accepted a range

of answers. Hence, the setter had expanded the mark scheme to accept the following answers: caring, loving, dedicated, affectionate, patient, attentive father

Answers not accepted include: playful, responsible, humorous, dutiful, friendly, good, great, hardworking

Some candidates focused wrongly on the line 'Moving between the aisles, his eyes darted rapidly, trying to locate the items he needed - toothpaste, detergent, a leg of lamb, eggs and potatoes.' This statement was too generic without revealing much about Stephen, they wrongly assumed that he was efficient, purposeful or focused.

Question asked for the reader's impression of Stephen, not his relationship with Kate. Hence, answers suggesting that he had a close relationship with his daughter were not accepted.

- 7 The writer claimed that Kate 'loathed being disturbed' (line 19). Explain how this claim is supported with reference to **three** pieces of evidence from Paragraph 3.

'clung stubbornly on to her seat' suggests she **obstinately/doggedly/persistently**

gripped/clutched/grasp/held onto the seat

'tug-of-war' suggests she **struggled against/resisted being lifted off the seat by her father**

'hands stretching longingly to touch the trolley seat' suggests she extended/reached out

her hands **yearningly** towards trolley seat (**showing great desire**) [3]

(For this question type, students are expected to quote the pieces of evidence and explain each one. Based on the specimen marking guide given, paraphrasing of key words would suffice.)

Majority of the candidates were able to identify the quotations correctly. Again, they lost the marks due to inaccurate explanations. This could stem from their lack of a rich vocabulary bank.

Wrong quotations identified are: 'she relished bring on her throne' which simply means she enjoyed sitting on it and 'lift her high to get her out' which does not show any form of resistance.

For 'clung stubbornly on to her seat' candidates have to explain the terms 'clung' and 'stubbornly'.

Explanations not accepted include:

- Kate refused to leave the seat or was unwilling/reluctant to leave the seat.
- Kate insisted on staying/struggle to stay on the seat.
- Kate was unwilling to let go.

These statements do not show the action she took to remain on the trolley seat.

For 'tug-of-war', candidates need to show the struggle between Kate and her father as he lifted her off the seat.

Explanations not accepted include:

- Kate retaliated against her father.
- Kate fought with her father.
- Kate pushed her father away.
- Kate used force against her father to prevent from being dragged off.
- Kate challenged her father.
- Kate was struggling to stay on the seat. (Expression suggests Kate was experiencing difficulty remaining on seat rather than resisting her father.)

These statements were too strong, suggesting Kate behaving violently towards her father.

For 'hands stretching longingly to touch the trolley seat', candidates must explain the word 'longingly'.

Explanations not accepted include:

- Kate was desperate/eager to go back on the seat.
- Kate was doing everything in her power to return to the seat.
- Kate missed being on the seat.
- Kate wished to return to the seat.
- Kate could not bear to leave the seat.

- 8 In Paragraph 3, which phrase suggests that Stephen could have imagined the presence of a figure in a dark coat?

'his own invention'

[1]

A significant number of candidates fell for the distractors 'shapes drifted and dissolved', 'he might have been conscious of a figure in a dark coat' and 'it was hardly an awareness at all'. A few lost the mark due to carelessness. One paraphrased the quotation to 'his own imagination' and another wrote 'his own intervention'. Others were not succinct and gave excess details 'could have been a dress or a shopping bag or his own invention'.

- 9 'He took it and turned. Kate was gone. No one was behind the trolley.' (lines 31-32)
What effect does the writer create by using a series of short sentences?

The writer creates a sense of abruptness, emphasising the suddenness

of Kate's disappearance. (idea of her disappearance happening too quickly)

[1]

Effects of short sentences have been tested on two occasions – 2014 O Level Q9 and 2017 O Level Q7)

This proved to be a challenging question as only the stronger candidates managed to gain the mark. In this question, the writer is trying to convey the suddenness of Kate's disappearance. Answers not accepted include:

- Emphasises the panic/surprise/uneasiness he felt.
- To show dramatic effect.
- To create suspense/tension.
- To exaggerate the situation.
- To show urgency.

- 10 (a) From Paragraph 4, give **two** details which suggest that Stephen did not immediately register the severity of Kate's disappearance.

(i) **'unhurriedly and calmly'**

(ii) **'looked expectantly (to his left and right)'**

[2]

For this question, those who lost the marks gave excess details. Taking reference from the marking guide for the specimen paper, it is clear that Cambridge markers demand precise answers when candidates are identifying details, evidence or phrases. Majority of the candidates identified the detail 'unhurriedly and calmly'. Those who lost the mark split the detail into two parts (i) 'unhurriedly' and (ii) 'calmly' or gave excess detail 'Unhurriedly and calmly, he pushed the trolley clear'. The second detail 'looked expectantly' proved more elusive to the candidates as they wrongly chose 'thinking she had ducked down behind the end of the counter' or 'he took a few paces and glanced down the only aisle she would have had time to reach'. Some lost the mark to excess information given 'he stepped back and looked expectantly to his left and right'.

(b) In Paragraph 4, why did Stephen miss the opportunity to find Kate?

He was only looking for a three-year-old child and did not pay attention to a figure hurrying away from him. [1]

Candidates need to realise that the idea of Kate being kidnapped did not occur to Stephen or he would have looked for possible suspicious-looking people. Most of the candidates realised that Stephen was too focused on looking for his child and did not notice a man hurrying away. However, a number lost the mark as they gave excess information about his immediate worry being the traffic.

11 In Paragraph 5, give **two** reasons why Stephen did not expect to find Kate on the broad pavement outside the supermarket. Answer **in your own words**.

(i) Kate was not inclined to take risks or explore new and unfamiliar situations.

(Do not accept if answer contains: 'not adventurous') [1]

(ii) Kate would not wander off with strangers, feeling more comfortable around people she knew. [1]

(Do not accept if answer contains: 'She was also not a strayer, preferring to be in the company of people she was familiar with.' Note: 'with strangers' is needed to make the answer complete if the students do not include the part about her feeling more comfortable around the people she was familiar with.)

Majority of the candidates made a reasonable attempt to paraphrase the text. However, there are many awkward expressions or distortions of intended meaning due to inaccurate paraphrasing.

Answers accepted for Part (i) include:

- Kate did not like exploring new places/her surroundings.
- Kate was not curious or brave enough to go and discover her surroundings or venture out to unknown places.

Answers not accepted for Part (i) include:

- Kate dared not go out on her own.
- Kate would not do dangerous things.
- Kate was not a thrill seeker.
- Kate was not outgoing or an extrovert.

Some candidates split the idea 'She was also not a strayer, preferring to be in the company of people she was familiar with.' To answer Part (i) and Part (ii). It was decided to award them a mark if they paraphrased both parts correctly.

Answers not accepted for Part (ii) include:

- Kate liked staying at places she recognised.
- Kate only liked to interact with people she knew.
- Kate was introverted and would not talk to strangers.
- Kate was known to stay with people she was comfortable with.
- Kate would not run away from her father.
- Kate enjoyed people's company.

- 12 (a) Give **two** details from Paragraph 6 to show Stephen had 'abandoned all propriety' (line 47).

(i) 'bawling her name'

(ii) 'pushing shoppers (out of his way)'

[1]

Both answers need to be correct to score one mark. Excess denies applies if answer contains 'taking long strides' or/and 'pounded the length of an aisle'. Again, many candidates lost the mark due to excess information given.

- (b) In Paragraph 6, the writer describes Stephen's overwhelming fear. What does the writer do to emphasise this fear?

The writer uses repetition of the word 'too' which appeared three times in 'too

evident, too raw, too forceful' to convey the excessive fear

[1]

This question is modelled after 2015 O Level Q5 and 2019 O Level Q7. Based on the markers' reports, students need to identify the language features the writer has employed. It is insufficient to say that the writer used repetition. Candidates need to identify the repeated word 'too' and recognise that it conveys an excessive amount of fear.

Answers not accepted include:

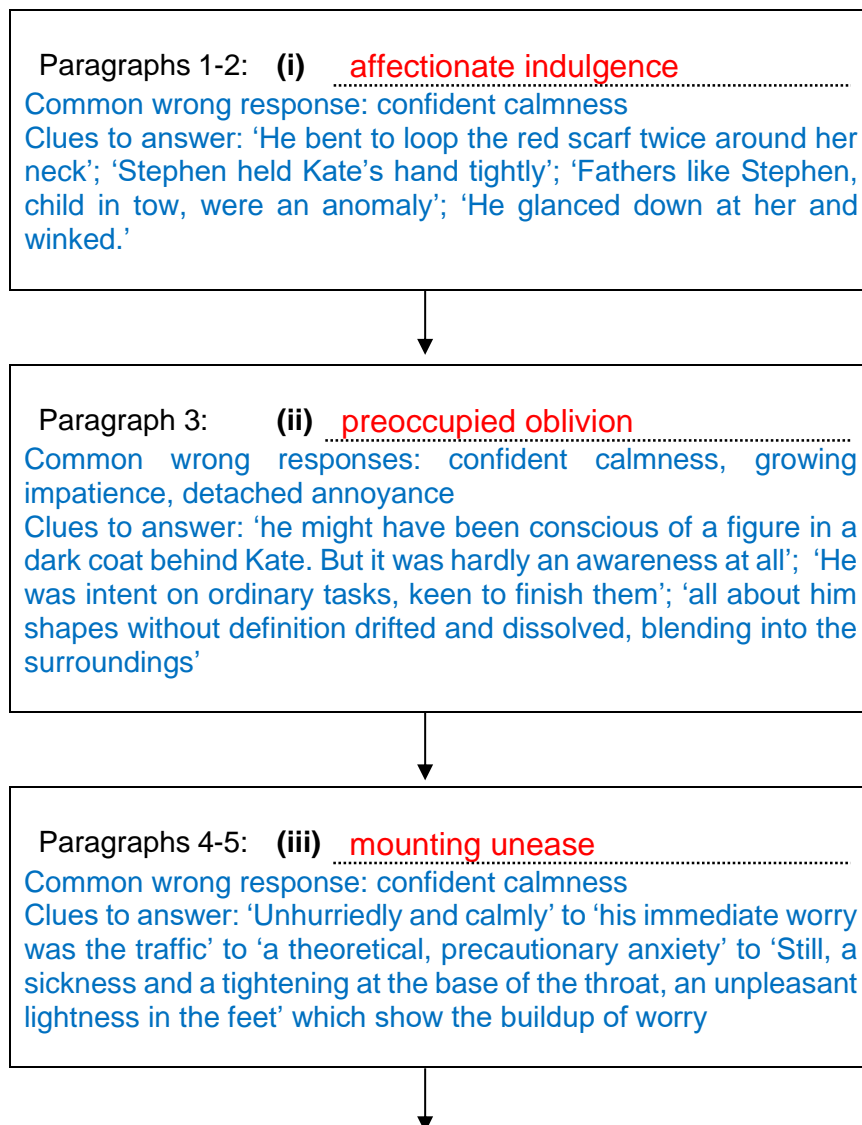
- He used different adjectives to describe the fear.
- He used rule of three with emotive words.
- He used rule of three in 'too evident, too raw, too forceful'. (Focus should be on word 'too'.)
- He used semi-colon.
- He used short sentences.

- 13** The structure of the text reflects Stephen's responses to his situation at different stages of the narrative. Complete the flow chart by choosing one phrase from the box to summarise his response in each part of the text. There are some extra phrases in the box you do not need to use.

Stephen's responses

growing impatience	confident calmness	detached annoyance
frantic panic	mounting unease	affectionate indulgence
preoccupied oblivion		

Flow chart



Paragraph 6: (iv) frantic panic

Clues to answer: 'he abandoned all propriety'; 'He was taking long strides, bawling her name as he pounded the length of an aisle, pushing shoppers out of his way'; 'His fear was overwhelming; it was too evident, too raw, too forceful'

[4]

Majority of the candidates scored at least 3 out of 4 marks for this section. There are still instances of transference errors 'confident' to 'confidence' or 'preoccupied' to 'preoccupied'. One candidate even combined one word each from two options to derive at 'affectionate unease'.



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Section C

Mark Scheme

Prepared by Roy Soh

Section C [25 marks]

Refer to Text 4 on pages 5 and 6 of the Insert for Questions 14 - 19.

- 14 Paragraph 1 suggests what happens once the infection has spread to all corners of the globe.

- (a) Which word in Paragraph 1 tells us that the fungus has had a devastating effect on the Earth?

It is 'ravaged'.

[1]

Most candidates were able to pick out the right word by correctly identifying the contextual clues which helped to lead them to the answer.

- (b) Which phrase in the same paragraph suggests that human society has broken down after the fungus outbreak?

It is '(only) remnants of civilisation'.

[1]

Students were less successful in picking out this phrase, with many deceived by the distractors 'scattered survivor settlements' and 'brutally oppressive 'Quarantine Zones'', but these are merely examples of how civilisation has broken down. Students must focus on the key phrase 'human society' and 'civilisation' is actually a synonym.

- 15 Why does the writer consider the nickname 'zombie ant fungus' (line 9) to be apt?

Like the zombie virus, the fungus takes control of the ant's actions/body. / Just as the

zombie virus takes over, the ant loses control of its own body.

[1]

Students must focus on the key word 'apt' and understand why it is appropriate for the fungus to be labelled that way. The ant becomes like a zombie under the fungus' influence and the students must be able to explain it in this manner.

- 16 (a) What does the writer mean when he says that the behaviour of the fungus is 'insidious' (line 28)?

He is emphasising that the fungus is able to cause harm without the ants even

knowing about it/until it is too late to do anything to stop it.

[1]

Students must zoom in on the quoted word and understand what it means in order to derive the answer. There are contextual clues found in the preceding sentences to help students. Students should avoid lifting to answer this type of question.

- (b) What is the writer's tone when he makes that comment?

It is one of disapproval

[1]

Students must first decide if the tone is positive or negative. With the contextual clues, it is clear that it is the latter. The phrase to consider would be 'no way for the other ants to react' to arrive at the correct tone. The writer almost seems to be disagreeing with how the fungus attacks.

- 17 Here is a part of a conversation between two students, Kaylyn and David, who have read the article.

I agree that fungi are more of a threat than viruses and bacteria.

But that is only true in the world of the television series and not grounded in reality.



Kaylyn



David

(a) Give **two** pieces of evidence from Paragraph 5 to support Kaylyn's view.

(i) Kaylyn can say that fungi seek to control us by altering our minds

[1]

(ii) She can also argue that fungi can be more resistant to antibiotics than
viruses and bacteria.

[1]

Most of the students were able to pick out the correct pieces of evidence as it is actually quite straightforward. There were enough language cues and contextual clues to point them to the answers.

(b) Give **one** piece of evidence from Paragraph 6 to support David's view.

David can point out that fungi cannot survive in human bodies which are too
warm.

[1]

The phrase 'in the real world' should have been enough to direct the students to look at the fact that human bodies are too warm. However, many students were distracted by the next sentence which spelt out what must happen for the show's scenario to really unfold, but that is not the right evidence for David's claim.

18 In the world of the television series, victims of the fungus become 'puppets with poisoned minds permanently fixed on one unifying goal' (lines 46–47).

In your own words, what is the 'one unifying goal' of the infected people?

It is to pass on the disease to all people (1) [replace 'spread the infection to

every last human alive'] in whatever way possible/by using any method/ at all costs (1) [replace 'by any means necessary']

[2]

Students should remember to avoid using the root word in their attempts to rephrase the key phrases in the relevant part. Most had no problems identifying the relevant part, but in using their own words.

19 **Using your own words as far as possible**, describe what happens to an ant after it is infected by the fungus and after it has died from the infection.

Use only information from Paragraphs 2 and 3.

Your summary must be in continuous writing (not note form). It must not be no longer than 80 words (not counting the words given to help you begin).

After an ant is infected by the fungus, it will

From the text	Own words
What happens to the host once it is infected ...	
1. ... slowly taking over its behaviour ...	lose control of its behaviour/actions.
2. ... infected ants appear perfectly normal and go about their business undetected by the rest of the colony behave normally, avoiding detection by others.
3. ... ant is forced to leave its nest for a more humid microclimate that is favourable to the fungus's growth ...	Next, it has to abandon its nest for more humid conditions that help fungus growth.
4. ... is compelled to descent to a vantage point about 10 inches off the ground ...	The host also unwittingly descends to a position approximately 10 inches high,
5. ... sink its jaws into a leaf vein on the north side of a plant and wait for death ...	biting onto a leaf vein on the north side of a plant. As the host dies,
6. ... the fungus feeds on its victim's innards ...	the fungus eats its insides.
What happens to the host after it dies from the infection...	
When the ant dies,	
7. ... the fungus sends a fruiting body out through the base of the ant's head ...	A fruiting body grows from the bottom of the ant's head.
8. ... turning its shrivelled corpse into a launchpad ...	The corpse becomes a launchpad ...
9. ... it can jettison its spores and infect new ants ...	to shoot its spores and infect more ants.
(82 words)	

(15)

Common Issues:

1. It was clear that many students did not first write a draft, leading to an error-strewn and very messy final submission which made it hard for the marker to read and mark. Students are strongly encouraged to prepare a draft before penning the final version.
2. Students must remember to write their summary in a continuous paragraph and not break it up into two or even three paragraphs. This is not unacceptable.
3. Missing key details – many students lost marks for Content as they did not include the parts in bold in their answers. This left that many points were left incomplete and inaccurate.
4. Students should avoid putting in three or more points into a single sentence. This is akin to listing and this is frowned upon by Cambridge markers.
5. Careless use of own words – students who were careless as they replaced phrases or words often lost Content marks as the meaning of the point was altered or the point was rendered incomplete. Prominent examples include:
 - The fungus does not 'invade' the ant's behaviour
 - 'warm' is not the same as 'humid'; neither is 'more humid' the same as 'humid'
 - A fruiting body emerges out of the base of an ant's head, not 'to' it

- The fungus feeds on the insides of an ant and not its 'body'
- 6. Students should make use of single-word sequence markers or connectors to link their points and make their summary more coherent as a whole.
- 7. Articles (a, an, the) have been described by Cambridge markers as being 'grammatically essential' – they should not be left out in order to cut down the number of words as this will cost the student dearly with regard to the Language Component.
- 8. Students should not make use of contractions in their summary writing. Contractions will still be counted as two words.
- 9. Students should remember to indicate the word count and be honest when doing so.